

VZCZCXRO4382
PP RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #4363/01 2821235
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 091235Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2361
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7613
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 6453
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1942
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 1112
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 1052
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 7619
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 3660
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 2153
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 3070

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ISLAMABAD 004363

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [MASS](#) [KPAO](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: FATA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE: OCTOBER 8, 2007

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 3476

[1](#)B. PESHAWAR 559

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTS: Implementation of the Mission's strategy in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) is moving ahead despite challenges. We received our fiscal year 2007 (FY07) funding for the FATA by September 30.

With our prodding, the donor community is taking steps to improve coordination of assistance to the border areas. We are also engaging the Pakistani government on several levels to get buy-in for the U.S. Government's approach to supporting Pakistan's FATA plan. We continue to urge the government to appoint a Pakistani "FATA czar" who can cut through the bureaucracy.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Post has three urgent action requests: 1) Funding for a temporary FATA Coordinator until a permanent position can be established. We have identified a WAE, who would also coordinate border projects until a more permanent coordination mechanism can be found. 2) Immediate release of renewed funding (which lapsed in March 2007) for cost-effective, cross-border Pashto language radio programs that have been successful. A robust information campaign is going to be key to any counterinsurgency strategy in the FATA. 3) To carry this out, we would welcome the assignment of a Military Information Support Team to the embassy, which we understand is under consideration. (See paras 12, 15 and 16 for action requests.) END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTS.

USAID Signs FATA Agreement with Pakistan

[1](#)3. (SBU) USAID's Mission Director signed the FATA agreement with the Government of Pakistan's Economic Affairs Division on September 30, 2007. The Pakistani side had delayed the signing to seek U.S. assistance in the form of a cash transfer rather than through USAID-implemented projects. As the September 30 deadline neared, Ambassador and USAID underscored that this issue was non-negotiable. Pakistan eventually signed the agreement without any changes to our project-based structure. The agreement provides \$73 million of new money for USAID's new programs in the FATA.

¶4. (SBU) Representatives from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) returned to Pakistan the week of September 23 to begin setting up OTI's program to strengthen community and government relations in the FATA. The program's implementers should arrive by mid-November and this effort should begin full operations by January 2008.

¶5. (SBU) Preparation is also underway on USAID's Livelihood Development Program, whose initial goal is to generate employment and develop skills for young men in the Tribal Areas. "Livelihoods" is designed to create better alternatives for those who would otherwise be susceptible to recruitment by extremists. USAID sent out its request for applications (RFAs) for this \$300 million program in mid-September. USAID expects to receive proposals by November 2 and implementing partners selected in January 2008.

¶6. (SBU) USAID has received proposals for the Capacity Building Program for the FATA Secretariat and FATA Development Authority. The selection committee has met and is reviewing proposals. USAID expects to sign a contract with the winning partner by late December, with implementation beginning in January 2008.

Donor Coordination

¶7. (SBU) The Ambassador met October 3 with Dutch Ambassador Willem Andrae to discuss donor coordination for FATA development. Andrae agreed to take the lead coordinating role on behalf of the larger donors to the border areas.

ISLAMABAD 00004363 002 OF 004

Post has already been meeting with donors. We do not believe the current leadership of UNDP is capable of assuming the traditional coordinating role among donors.

¶8. (SBU) USAID Deputy Director met October 3 with development assistance counterparts from other donors in Pakistan. He presented USAID's portion of the Mission's FATA strategy and learned more about others' assistance plans. Canada is contributing C\$12 million to the FATA, primarily through the World Food Program. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is directing approximately US\$1 million to support the FATA Secretariat. But for the most part, other donors are looking to the U.S. to lead in the FATA while they focus their own efforts along the rest of the Pak-Afghan border (i.e., Baluchistan, Northern Areas). The EU Commission, for instance, is reluctant to work in the FATA because it believes projects cannot be properly monitored.

Coordination with Government of Pakistan

¶9. (SBU) Acting DCM and USAID Mission Director briefed the Mission's FATA strategy on September 19 to the Economic Affairs Division (EAD) of the Finance Ministry. EAD is responsible for coordinating foreign aid to Pakistan and signs the government's assistance agreements. Our briefing made clear that EAD, like the rest of the Pakistani government, has not fully grasped the full extent of the U.S. Government's assistance plan for the Tribal Areas, which comprises development, security, political, and infrastructure elements. Peshawar PO and USAID representative provided a similar briefing to the FATA Secretariat on September 22. The discussion highlighted the

SIPDIS
importance of persistent coordination and transparency at the field level. We will continue to give detailed briefs to EAD and other federal and provincial entities on each aspect of our plan.

¶10. (SBU) Our interactions with the government also revealed

bureaucratic confusion and disputes over the FATA plan. Despite EAD's lead role, the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) wants to be involved in coordinating all donor assistance to the Tribal Areas. Consulate Peshawar has faced numerous roadblocks from SAFRON in setting up an interim Levy Training Center, which should have been a straightforward project. Ref B highlights the overlapping authorities and complexity of the FATA's political administration. We will need to be resilient in managing the patchwork of government entities who want a hand in the FATA plan's implementation.

FATA Strategy Leadership

¶11. (SBU) Now that the presidential election is over, post will re-engage with the President and Prime Minister on appointing a Pakistani "FATA czar," someone who has the stature needed to overcome the government's bureaucratic hurdles. Without such a person, the FATA strategy risks stalling on the Pakistani side due to red tape. Retiring Vice Chief of Army Staff Ahsan Hyat would certainly fit the bill, but we believe there are alternatives. Post has engaged the government on this issue and will continue to raise it at the highest levels after Pakistan's presidential election.

¶12. (SBU) Post is urgently seeking Washington approval to hire a "FATA coordinator" to oversee our interagency FATA strategy (septel). This is a critical need, so while the position is being created, we are working closely with the Department to assign an officer to serve as interim FATA coordinator and have indentified a WAE to fill this position. This position will not interfere with program implementation of individual sections/agencies, but we need a single officer

ISLAMABAD 00004363 003 OF 004

to manage this initiative. He/she can also oversee, at least temporarily, some of the border projects.

Public Diplomacy

¶13. (SBU) Conducting an effective public diplomacy campaign is particularly difficult in the FATA, where residents are instinctively suspicious of government programs -- more so when such programs bear the U.S. government's imprint. The government of Pakistan is fully aware of this challenge, as are we. Post has developed a public diplomacy strategy that calls for advising and enhancing the Pakistani government's outreach to FATA residents.

¶14. (SBU) Tribal leaders told Ambassador during her recent trip to Peshawar that there were not enough information programs in their areas and there was no effort to counter extremist voices. Why, one tribal leader asked, did we not help amplify statements by leading Muslim clerics that suicide bombings were not Islamic?

¶15. (SBU) Since 2004, we have supported Pashto-language radio programming that is highly effective in getting moderate viewpoints out to the public on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border, and we want to continue that support. The project's initial funding came from SCA/RA, with USAID managing the program. Grant funding lapsed in March 2007, although the project director continues to produce two programs: "On the Borderline" and "Religion and the World." The Office of the Undersecretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy (R) has notified us that it would fund \$140,000 for "Religion in the World" by October 29. (Note: In March 2007, post originally requested \$450,000 for both programs. End note.) The U.S. Government must preserve and augment funding for this type of media outreach -- a small investment that earns us a tremendous return. Post requests the Department

immediately release \$140,000 to ensure continued outreach to Pashto-speaking audiences.

¶16. (SBU) Post is aware of consideration of a proposal to send a Military Information Support Team (MIST) to the area. We would welcome this additional resource to augment our information outreach.

Frontier Corps Assistance

¶17. (SBU) Strengthening the Frontier Corps, Pakistan's first line of defense on the Afghan border, is an important piece of the U.S. assistance plan. The Frontier Corps has a historical and locally accepted presence on the border, whereas the Pakistani Army has traditionally stayed out of the FATA. The Office of the Defense Representative to Pakistan (ODRP) has obligated \$29.4 million of its \$39.4 million of FY07 Department of Defense Counternarcotics funding. This will fund an expansion of the Frontier Corps, a new Frontier Corps training center, Border Surveillance Centers (BSCs), special operations training for air crews, communications gear, and FLIR night observation devices. The contractor is now refining design plans for the training center and the BSCs in consultation with ODRP and CJTF-82. In the meantime, RAO medics may be able to provide some emergency training to Frontier Corps medics, as Frontier Corps units are reluctant to fight because there is limited care and increased combat.

¶18. (SBU) DEA is beginning to engage with the Frontier Corps. DEA conducted a 3-day drug enforcement training course with the Frontier Corps (Northwest Frontier Province) in mid-September. A training session on clandestine drug labs is planned for November. During DEA Administrator Karen Tandy's late-September visit to Islamabad, she discussed with Interior Minister Sherpao further DEA cooperation with the

ISLAMABAD 00004363 004 OF 004

Frontier Corps.

¶19. (SBU) In recent meetings, senior Pakistani officials have incorrectly claimed that the U.S., for all its talk of helping the Frontier Corps, has not yet provided material support. In fact, the embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) has provided the Frontier Corps more than \$31 million worth of lifesaving equipment, communications gear, and other essential items over the past five years, with another \$8 million in the pipeline. Ambassador wrote to Foreign Secretary Riaz Khan on September 24 with these details to set

SIPDIS

the record straight. Khan replied quickly that he would disseminate this information within the Pakistani government.

NAS also is providing another \$2 million in commodity support for the Frontier Constabulary, which interdicts in the Tribal Areas' interior suspected terrorists and traffickers who make it past the Frontier Corps. Both organizations are suffering high casualty rates (septel).

Visit by GAO Team

¶20. (SBU) A four-person GAO team visited September 23-28 to review U.S. assistance to Pakistan/Afghan border areas. Their schedule included a full slate of Embassy briefings, meetings with Pakistani officials, and discussions with other donors to the FATA. The team also traveled to Peshawar for briefings at the Consulate, a helicopter tour of the border (including an aerial view of the new Frontier Corps training facility and a border security road constructed by NAS), and meetings with government officials there. We will continue to respond to their requests via the Department's GAO liaison.

